

Y-W ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

MARCH 2023



MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box Y
Akron, CO 80720



STREET ADDRESS

26862 U.S. Hwy 34
Akron, CO 80720



ph 970-345-2291

tf 800-660-2291

fax 970-345-2154

web ywelectric.coop

Y-W Electric Association, Inc.

is dedicated to providing high-quality, reliable electric service and related products to our members at competitive prices. Our members deserve and shall receive quality service unexcelled in our industry. We are committed to maintaining an environment where the Board of Directors and employees can perform at maximum potential to benefit our Y-W community.



Each month, Y-W Electric Association offers consumer-members a chance to earn a \$20 credit on their next electric bill. If you find your name and account number in this magazine, call 800-660-2291 and ask for your credit. It couldn't be easier.

Get acquainted with your account number, read your *Colorado Country Life* magazine and pick up the phone. You must claim your credit during the month in which your name appears in the magazine. (Check the date on the front cover.)



Stay in the Know

BY TRENT LOUTENSOCK GENERAL MANAGER

At Y-W Electric Association, Inc., we are constantly striving to improve our operational efficiency so we can provide the most reliable electric service possible for you, our consumer-members. [George & Emily Ellis 1052401802]

We rely on data for nearly every aspect of our operations, which is why we need your help. By making sure we have your most accurate and complete contact information, we can continue to provide the high level of service that you expect and deserve. Accurate information enables us to improve customer service and enhance communications for reporting and repairing outages. It also allows co-op consumer-members to receive information about other important programs, events and activities.

Up-to-date contact information can potentially speed up the power restoration process during an outage. For example, the phone number you provide is linked to your service address in our outage management system. This means that when you call to report an outage, our system recognizes your phone number and matches it with your account location. Accurate information helps our outage management system predict the location and possible cause of an outage, making it safer, easier and faster for our crews to correct the problem.

While we always do our best to maintain service, we occasionally plan outages to update, repair or replace equipment. In these instances, we can provide advance notifications to affected consumer-members through automated phone messages, text messages, social media channels or email — that is, if we have your updated contact information and communication preferences.

Keeping us updated with your information also helps us when there's a question about energy use or billing and capital credit information. Emails and text messages are also used to notify registered members of any changes in co-op event details. In addition, discrepancies on your account can be taken care of promptly if we have accurate account information.

Many of you have been members of the co-op for years and it's likely your account information hasn't been updated for some time. We recognize that many members now use a cellphone as their primary phone service, and we might not have that number in our system.

I want to emphasize that when you provide your contact information to the co-op, we will never share this information with any third parties — it is used only by Y-W Electric Association to send important information to you. Please take a moment to confirm or update your contact information by submitting changes through our website, filling in the address change portion of your billing stub or giving us a call at 970-345-2291. By doing so, you will be helping us improve service and efficiency so we can better serve you and all members of the co-op.



TRENT LOUTENSOCK



BILLING CORNER

BILLING NOTIFICATIONS

Have you visited www.ywelectric.coop lately? Our website gives you the ability to check your monthly usage, see payment history and view past billing invoices. Payments can also be made on our website using SmartHub. Once you have registered, you can make payments, view your history or contact our office. You can also log on to manage notifications. [Sam Chartier 5544008001]



There are two ways to be notified. You can receive an email or a text message. These notifications will need to be turned on by going to “Notifications” and “Manage Contacts.” You can add both your email and phone number for text messages. You will need to make sure the box to “Receive Text Messages” is checked. This is found by clicking the Edit button on the “Verified Contacts” page. The phone number should be the number you want to receive text messages on, and the box should be checked for text messages. Once this is correct, select the green “continue” box. You will need to read the “Terms and Conditions” and either Agree or Cancel. If you “Agree,” a phone verification code will be texted to you. Once you enter this code in the box and save the contact, you are set up to get text messages.

Once you have your email and/or text message contact information set up, you can go to “Manage Notifications.” There are four areas you can receive notifications on. You can go into each one of these and choose the alerts you want to receive. You get to decide which is important to you. [Kent E. & Rhonda R. Davis 5401007501]

The SmartHub app can also be downloaded on a mobile device. It is compatible with both Android and iPhones. A payment can be made this way as well.

Y-W Electric does not use a third party for payments. If you are charged for making a payment, this is not being made on our website. For your security, please make sure you are logged into our website, www.ywelectric.coop when making a payment or use our SmartHub app. **Please contact our office if you have any questions about our website.**



Congratulations to the winners claiming \$20 from the January 2023 issue:

Raymond & Margaret Flake
Russell & Deborah Zwirn
Lonnie L. & Courtney Knudsen

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Washing windows and screens is a great way to practice energy efficiency during spring cleaning. Clean windows and screens make your home brighter by allowing more sunlight in, reducing the need for lamps and fixtures.

Clean screens also allow more fresh air in the home when the windows are open to recycle indoor air. Natural light and clean air are energy savers, and they enhance overall health and productivity.

Source: energy.gov



Play it Safe When Using Portable Generators

Before you operate a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.

Photo Source: Honda

BY ABBY BERRY

Storm season is here, which means greater potential for power outages. If you're planning to use a portable generator in the event of an outage, Y-W Electric Association reminds you to play it safe.

With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during a power outage. However, when generators are used incorrectly, they can be extremely hazardous. In a 2022 report, the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated that 85 U.S. consumers die every year from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators.

Here are 10 things to keep in mind when using a portable generator:

- **DO:** Install backup carbon monoxide alarms.
- **DO:** Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times.
- **DO:** Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows and vents that can allow carbon monoxide to enter the home.
- **DO:** Ensure that your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter to prevent electric shock injuries.
- **DO:** Use three-pronged extension cords that are rated to handle the load of the generator. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays or other damage before use.
- **DON'T** operate a generator inside your home or in an enclosed (or partially enclosed) space. Generators produce high levels of carbon monoxide, which can be deadly. [Judy D. Shively 1173601302]
- **DON'T** open windows or doors while the generator is running outdoors.
- **DON'T** rely on generators as a full-time source of power. They should be used

only temporarily or in emergency situations to power essential equipment or appliances.

- **DON'T** overload generators. They should only be used to power essential equipment. Make sure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.
- **DON'T** connect generators directly into household wiring unless you have an appropriate transfer switch installed. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can back-feed along power lines and electrocute utility lineworkers making repairs.

While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous — even deadly — if improperly operated. Before you use a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.

If you have questions about proper use of portable generators, we're here to help. Give us a call at 970-345-2291.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.



REMINDER

If you experience an outage or electrical emergency anytime day or night, contact Y-W Electric Association by calling the office at 970-345-2291. DO NOT report outages or electrical emergencies via email. Y-W cannot monitor that information effectively, especially after hours. The only way to ensure we know you have an outage or electrical emergency is to phone it in. [John K. & Mary Ellen Hardwick 1061208900]

Safety Tip

Heating equipment accounts for 13% of home fires. Place a space heater on a hard surface and make sure clothing, papers and other combustible items are at least 3 feet away from the heater.



Safe Electricity.org®



Receive money for being safe

Install a double throw generator transfer switch and collect a sizable rebate as a reward for safety. Y-W Electric reminds those members using standby generator sets how important it is to connect into the electrical system correctly. These switches increase the margin of safety both for our personnel as well as the members utilizing a standby generator. Since 2001, the Y-W Board of Directors has sponsored a rebate program to encourage all members with standby generators to install the proper double throw transfer switches. The program was initiated to provide safety for linemen working on downed power lines following storms.



For a number of years before that, Y-W Electric provided double throw transfer switches at cost for members. However, even at cost, the purchase price discouraged members from installing the safety devices. The Y-W board reasoned that providing a rebate that covers a significant portion of the panel cost would encourage members to install the switches for safety.

The provisions for receiving the rebate are as follows:

1. Member may purchase a double throw transfer switch with Underwriters Laboratories approval rating for service entrance equipment from any source and present purchase invoice within 180 days of purchase.
2. Member may install equipment or hire others to install equipment.
3. Switch installation must be inspected and approved by a Y-W Electric employee.
4. Switch and installation must meet Article 702 of the National Electric Code.
5. Rebate is to be paid upon the schedule shown below:
 - 100 Amp Single Phase: \$250
 - 200 Amp Single Phase: \$325
 - 100 Amp Three Phase: \$400
 - 200 Amp Three Phase: \$475

Y-W Electric has contacted electrical contractors in the area and discussed the program with them. All of them have expressed support for the program. Y-W Electric will gladly advise the consumer who wishes to do his or her own work, but Y-W will not install any of the equipment. If you have questions, you may call your electrical contractor or Y-W Electric Association at 1-800-660-2291 or in Akron, calling area at 970-345-2291.



As you prepare for planting season, don't forget to plan for safety. There are many aspects to safety on the farm, but electrical safety is often overlooked. Keep these safety tips in mind as you prepare for planting:



TRAIN OTHERS

Train anyone working on your farm, including family members and seasonal workers, about electrical hazards.

SAFETY FIRST

Have daily meetings to review the day's work and discuss safety implications. Know and review where the power lines are, the clearance required, and the proper position of extensions as they are transported.



WAIT TO UNFOLD

Remind workers to fold or unfold extensions well into the field, not close to the field's edge where power lines are typically located.



USE A SPOTTER

When working in the vicinity of power lines, always have a spotter on the ground, who can direct you away from power lines or poles if you are getting too close.



DO NOT EXIT YOUR CAB

If your machine or truck makes contact with a power line, pole, or guy wire, you could become electricity's path to ground and become electrocuted if you step out of the cab.

CALL 9-1-1

Call 9-1-1 to have your electric utility dispatched to deenergize the power source. Only exit the cab if your equipment is on fire. If that happens, make a solid jump out and hop away with feet together as far as you can.



For more information:

Safe Electricity.org®